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SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: ...I'll be happy to stand corrected. But that is my view of the world and I can't see balancing the budget first with cuts that affect our most needy constituents and then, just to top it off for good measure, we'll increase the sales tax rate and really teach them a lesson about how we do things in Nebraska.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Beutler, on the Pederson amendment.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, with all due respect to Senator Pederson, I think this is the worst of all our possible solutions and, beyond that, it confounds me as to why the measure is adding to what we already have in the package and essentially doubling it. All that does, in my opinion, is kind of bring us back to square one and force us to sort out all over again these different sources of revenue that we've so tediously worked our way through up until this particular point in time. With the solution that we have now, it wouldn't have been my preferred solution because I think it's short on sales tax base expansion which is, to me, the fundamental reform that we need to do. But at least there's some of that in our current solution. In addition to that, there's the \$48 million in income tax. And, to me, if you just go with a sales tax increase, you're not getting that contribution from business that the Governor indicated should be there. To me, the income tax increase is the way, in fact, that you force a contribution from business people because they will be the ones, more than others, who contribute to an income tax. So you need to have the income tax in there, and the cigarette tax we've added. The cigarette tax and the income tax are permanent. Nothing is permanent with this sales tax increase. Why do we want to go through the whole process again next year if we don't have to? We're already going to have to do it to some extent because the cigarette tax is not permanent, although the sales tax base expansion and the income tax portions are permanent. So we're already going to have to do some of that. It makes no sense of me to try to go back and redo everything next year. We're going to have problems enough next year. The